

FIRE AND DEATH IN CHICAGO.

The Most Disastrous Conflagration That Ever Occurred in America—Over One Third of the City in Ruins—Map of the Destroyed City.



In the above map will be conveyed an idea of the ravages of the fire devil from the starting of the fire up to a late hour yesterday evening, but it is regrettable to add that even the wide area of desolation shadowed in its dark lines does not embrace the whole extent of the calamity owing to the peering of the sickle wind from the southwest to the north. This occurring too late to be indicated on the map, it must be imagined that the entire portion of the city south of Harrison street and between the south branch of the Chicago River and Lake Michigan, if not already devastated, is doomed. Hundreds of thousands of people of all ages and sexes are homeless, hungry wanderers. Ten thousand houses are, at least, wrecked and the city yearns for relief. The first fire, which caused so much alarm, broke out on Saturday night at Leil & Holmes' planing factory, on Canal street, near Van Buren, in the western division, and consumed four blocks. This conflagration was got under by the exertions of the firemen, and Chicago rested, as it were, after one of its sensations, happy that the fire had been stayed. The feeling of security was doomed to be of short duration, for on Sunday night the insatiable monster again spread his lurid wings, and this time with the portent of doom in the murky breath from his fiery nostrils. The southwest wind was blowing a gale, and the fire, which hurled its blazing brands and showers of glittering sparks aloft, caused the cheeks of those who witnessed it to blanch, as they saw it stretch out its long-reaching arms over the neighboring buildings and wrap them in his frightful glory. This was at ten o'clock at night, and occurred at the corner of Jefferson and Dekoven streets, again in the western division. Onward the tide of fire rolled, revelling, crackling and roaring in its destruction. It caught the combustible manufacturing places in its vicinity and hurried along with the cruel wind in the direction of the northeast. There was a hope succeeded in every breath to the fright of the previous hours. It was that the river would arrest the progress of its enemy, the fire. Up to the water's edge it rolled, and prayers were sent up that, like the waters of the Red Sea, it would interpose as hopeful a barrier to the flames as

that did to Pharaoh's host. The fire still lapped along the edge of the river, and still, as in a savage hate of man, over whom it had for once triumphed, flung its sparks and brands further, further into the water, trying to plant some messenger of destruction where it longed to be itself. By the glare of its burning the night became a mockery of day in its abnormal, shifting light. Was there no foothold on which it could cross? This was the question asked by the fire. "The bridges! the bridges!" shouted the multitude, and one by one their ponderous ligneous lengths were swung around and left heading up and down the stream. At length the fire answered its questions by flinging a shower of burning brands upon the Adams street bridge, and the wind, the friend of the fire, fanned them until the bridge was all aflame. Now it had a shorter distance to leap, and with a savage bound the fire was in the heart of the city—in its fat, rich heart, where active wealth had piled its palaces of commerce and housed its treasures in with iron and stone and thought it was free from the sweep of flood or flame. Eastward the fire journeyed with its fevered stride, eating like a withering canker through the vitals of the city. It was not long before the Michigan and Southern depot had risen up in smoke and blaze and fell in ruins, scattering a deeper volume of destruction around than ever before. Now northward the hell angel strode to the emporium of rich produce it was long for. Now it hung around a bank, burst open its doors, shivered its windows, scorched through its roof and tolled and burned its fiercest till the great safe—ah, the safe! had succumbed to its blasting, melting breath. The fire bells all over the city were booming continually—a terrible tocsin, with the one word fire in its scorching throat. The people had but to wake to know what was the matter. The danger seemed everywhere. Out in the street, half clad, dragging what could be snatched in the hurry of flight, the strong man, the half-fainting woman, the children with terror pictured in their wide-open eyes, all hurrying, with "nowhere to go." All the fire force in the city was combating the flames as fearlessly as brave men with their hearts and homes at stake well might. Without regard to whom it reached the panting fire licked

and consumed hotels and stores. Now the Court House, now the Sherman Hotel, anon the Western Union Telegraph Company's office, then the Tremont House, next the Chamber of Commerce, far-famed Farwell Hall—whatever lay in its fated path—until it flung itself upon the great Union depot with its spread of buildings, and had sacked with its cremating arms the corn-stored grain elevators by the lake and river side. Again it met the water and again it leaped then landing on the north side of the town. Here it had nothing to stay its steps. Wooden houses were but fuel in its way, and greedily it enveloped and devoured them. Onward for a mile it stretched as the day broke, fear before and ruin and ashes behind. Animals burst forth from keeping and rushed blind among the flames, adding to the terror of the scene as they gave forth their cries of dread. The homeless began to multiply in number through the blackened light of morning that paled but did not subdue the flames. A horrid thought flashed to the mind of all. "The water works are in danger if the wind lives." Up to Chicago avenue the fire raged unabated in its fury. The rumor that human beings were perishing in the flames became a certainty, and what made the agony deeper was that none could tell how many. Can it ever be told? Eastward from Chicago avenue, with the whole portion of the city to the south one seething, reeking sea of fire, it went and suddenly the water supply failed. It was said that the water works were burned. It was denied, reaffirmed and again denied. The men in power, with the Mayor at their head, were acting with the greatest energy. To the other cities of the West went forth a cry for firemen, and one and all the cities responded. To the world went out the simple tragic demand, which, in its brevity and pith alone tells its harrowing story:—"Send us food for the suffering. Our city is in ashes." Houses were blown down that the fire might be arrested, but it seized on the debris and burned that too. Would the willing wind never die? It did not fall, it only changed, as if it had exhausted all the demons whence it came and then had called upon the North to send out its vengeful breeze. It came

and the heart of the city was fanned afresh, and as night fell it swept down again upon the south and dashed its torches against the homes of the wealthy on Wabash and Michigan avenues. Down it came, an incendiary avalanche of fire. Not a theatre, hotel, newspaper office, or any building, pretentious or unpretentious, was spared. It is still raging southward, far below the streets upon our map, and will not be sated until it has died in the funeral pyre of the greatest city of the West. Its damage cannot be estimated. It may count from \$50,000,000 to \$150,000,000, but its most appalling items of loss which touch the heart and wring our sympathies will be that, perhaps, of hundreds of lives, the loss of homes and shelter to those who have toiled and hoped through years to a competency only to find it frittered in a night, in the shivering women and children, in the nakedness and hunger of gaunt poverty staring 100,000 souls in the face. It is a terrible visitation, a dire catastrophe! May God, who rides on the whirlwind and directs the storm, stay the terrors of His hand. Let man, woman and child solace those whom He has stricken.

AID FOR THE SUFFERERS.

Work for the Relief Association in Cincinnati—Prompt Forwarding of Supplies—Blankets, Crackers, Sausages and Dollars Hurried Forward—The Risks in the Cincinnati Insurance Offices.

CINCINNATI, Oct. 9, 1871. The Chicago news to-day paralyzed public industry. Business was generally neglected, and the citizens turned out en masse to hear the latest intelligence from the burning city. Newspaper offices were crowded to excess all day and are to-night thickly surrounded by people whose expressions of sadness and commiseration revive the memory of the war, when news of defeat reached the loyal masses. Private subscriptions started by the Chamber of Commerce foot up \$100,000. The City Council passed a resolution to appropriate \$100,000. A committee of the most wealthy and influential citizens are acting as receivers and disbursers. Three large steam fire engines, four hose reels and 4,000 feet of hose were dispatched by special train at eleven A. M., and reached Chicago at six P. M. by special train. A second special train left at five P. M. with 4,000 blankets, 150 barrels crackers, 4,000 pounds bread, 5,000 pounds dried beef, 3,000 pounds sausages and \$10,000 cash. It will reach Chicago a little after midnight, and committees are receiving cooked food, the donations of ladies, which will be sent by regular train in the morning. The relief movement was inspired by Governor Hayes, who came down from Columbus early this morning, and

labored with an energy and effectiveness worthy the highest commendation. Shelter tents were telegraphed for, but the government has no store here, and the despatch was sent to Washington for an order on Jeffersonville, where there are immense numbers. Of course they will not be withheld. The following is a list of Chicago risks by Cingular insurance companies:— Merchants and Manufacturers', \$27,000; Globe, \$30,000; Commercial, \$41,000; Eureka, \$4,500; Evans, Lindsay & Cassilly's agencies, \$29,000; Miami Valley, \$50,000; Washington, \$60,000; Union, \$25,000; People's, \$25,000; Burnet, \$11,000; Cincinnati, \$60,000; Franklin, \$15,500; Fire and Marine, \$20,000. The Andes say they will be able to meet all their losses. The Elba's risks are not known in the Cincinnati office. They were all taken on the parent office in Hartford, Conn.

The Aid Movement in Buffalo—One Hundred Thousand Dollars Promised—Insurance Companies Supposed to be Involved.

BUFFALO, Oct. 9, 1871. The Chicago fire is the principal topic of discussion among all classes. Business on the docks is entirely suspended. Crowds of people now surround the telegraph offices asking for the latest report.

The President of the Board of Trade states that Buffalo will contribute \$100,000 in cash. Fears are entertained that the Western, Buffalo City and the Buffalo Fire and Marine Insurance Companies of this city will have to suspend in consequence. Superintendent J. Tillinghast, of the New York Central Railroad, and Superintendent Hatch, of the Lake Shore, have issued orders that contributions intended for Chicago be forwarded by fast train free. The City Council at a regular meeting this afternoon authorized the issue of \$100,000 of city bonds for the immediate use of the Chicago sufferers. A committee of the Council leave to-night with a carload of provisions for Chicago. The officers and exhibitors at the International Industrial Exhibition raised ten thousand loaves of bread, to be forwarded at once for the relief of the sufferers. Owens' bakery, the largest in the city, has been authorized by the city officials to commence without delay and bake night and day until further orders for Chicago. The excitement here is intense, and the sympathy of the citizens of all classes is thoroughly aroused.

Donations from Ohio and Southern Cities.

CINCINNATI, Oct. 9, 1871. Announcements are coming in from all parts of the west and southwest of liberal subscriptions of money and provisions for the sufferers at Chicago. Trains laden with fire engines and provisions are being sent there from all points, with promises of more to follow. Wheeling, Columbus, Cleveland, Toledo, Detroit, Indianapolis, Terre Haute, Evansville, Memphis and Nashville, as well as larger cities, are contributing liberally.

The Odd Fellows in Rochester Send Aid.

ROCHESTER, N. Y., Oct. 9, 1871. Toronto Lodge, No. 8, I. O. O. F., contributed this evening \$250 to the sufferers by the great fire in Chicago. The other lodges of the order in this city propose making similar donations. If the address of the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the State of Illinois was made public by telegraph it would facilitate the sending of funds. The citizens of Rochester manifest much concern about the Chicago fire, and extra precautions have been taken against fire in this city. Measures are being

instituted to hold a public meeting in relation to this terrible disaster.

Elizabeth (N. J.) Gives Her Mite. ELIZABETH, N. J., Oct. 9, 1871. The City Council met to-night and unanimously voted an appropriation of \$1,000, to be forwarded to the Mayor of Chicago, toward relieving the sufferers by the great fire. They also passed resolutions of sympathy, and adjourned without doing any business, after Senator Willy, the President, had appointed a committee to collect donations from the citizens for the same object.

The Transportation of Supplies Over Western Railways.

NEW YORK, Oct. 9, 1871. The officers of the Great Western and Michigan Central Railroads also announce that they will transport, free of charge, from Suspension Bridge to Chicago, all supplies addressed to the Mayor of Chicago, contributed for the relief of the sufferers from the great fire.

DESTRUCTION OF THE GOVERNMENT RECORDS.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 10, 1871.

From despatches received here to-day it is learned that the records of the Custom House and internal revenue offices at Chicago have been destroyed. Even if it be no longer possible to ascertain the public debtors and the amounts of their indebtedness, collections can scarcely be enforced against a bankrupt community. In the face of so ruinous a disaster Congress may feel warranted in giving expression to the national sympathy by remitting the collection of taxes for a year, at least. The large sums involved in unsettled and disputed revenue cases are lost to the Treasury beyond question. Seventeen national banks, representing a capital of \$1,000,000, are threatened with insolvency through the destruction of the material security for their investments and the collateral basis of their large temporary loans. The records of the Military Division of the Missouri, including those transferred from General Sherman's former headquarters at St. Louis, have shared the common fate. These were principally of value in connection with Indian affairs, and it is not expected that any practical injury will result from their destruction. The papers and vouchers pertaining to the Montana Indian war claims are also lost, but the gross amount of those claims has already been reported to the proper committee of Congress, and it is thought that the amounts due to claimants can be determined with sufficient accuracy. Chicago was one of the largest depositories of the Quartermaster and Commissary Departments for supplying the posts in the Northwestern Territories, and those departments have probably lost considerable quantities of army supplies.

From despatches received here this evening it appears that the county land records of Cook county have been destroyed, and it will be impossible to escape much future litigation over titles to real estate of Chicago. A large portion of that city was once included in the military reserve town, which was some thirty years ago laid out and sold by the war department. The record of those sales is understood to be no longer in possession of that department and it has not been there for many years, nor can any information be supplied from the general land office.

The Grand Master of the Freemasons of the District of Columbia has ordered a special meeting of the Grand Lodge for to-morrow night to devise measures for extending Masonic aid to the fraternity of the ill-fated city.

CONTINUED ON SIXTH AND NINTH PAGES.